KANTAKABI LAKSHMIKANTA MAHAPATRA



songs of the soul

A K C C C PUBLICATION

Songs of the Soul

Kantakabi Centenary
Celebration Committee

SONGS OF THE SOUL

Kantakabi Lakshmikanta Mahapatra

With a Biographical Profile by Dr. Bishnupada Panda, an appreciation by Sourindra Barik and edited with an Introduction by Dr. Bhabagrahi Misra.

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In India and Abroad

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Bhabagrahi Misra

1988, being the Birth Centenary year of Kantakabi Lakshmikanta Mahapatra, it was decided that a selection of his writings could be prepared and published in English, to provide an opportunity for literateurs world over to enjoy, appreciate and assess the Writings of Kantakabi after almost thirty five years of his death.

Suddenly this manuscript was discovered. The songs were originally translated by the poet himself sometime in late forties or early fifties — but lying uncared for. It was felt that the missing titles of the songs for the English translation could be given by someone familiar with the poet's original writings in Oriya. So came the help of poet SOURINDRA BARIK, whose father happened to be a close friend of Kantakabi.

For the English speaking readers, a biography of the poet was necessary and DR. BISHNUPADA PANDA did the same with immense pleasure.

As a token of our appreciation for the poet's work in Oriya, I thought that a sample of his songs in Roman script could be included in this volume, only for a"feel"of the original songs in Oriya. "Sabuthiru Banchita Kari", "Bande Utkala Janani" and "Koti Koti Kanthe" are

three of Kantakabi's popular songs. These songs have already found a place in the Oral tradition of the musicians and the school-going children. So we have included the original songs in this volume.

Kantakabi Lakshmikanta was a versatile genius — trying his hand in drama, parody, poetry, novel and short stories, with a flair of nationalistic spirit, a strong sense of humour and incredible craftsmanship in sattire. As a musician and actor he contributed his best to the rich tradition of performing Arts in Orissa.

Kantakabi centenary celebration committee will feel encouraged, if this volume is received enthusiastically by the poets and musicians of the world. I deem it a great privilege to have been associated with this project in editing the *Songs of the Soul*.

KANTA KABI LAKSHMIKANTA : A PROFILE

Dr. Bishnupada Panda

Way back in 1967, I just tried my hand in translating a couple of beautiful lyrics of Lakshmikanta from his *Jeevan Sangeeta* into Bengali, for a journal. By any stretch of imagination, I never thought that after two decades, I shall have the proud privilege of drawing a profile of this eminent literateur and give my self-imposed assignment a full circle.

The very name and titles — Chaudhury Bhagabat prasad Samantarai Mohapatra, unmistakably indicates that he belonged to an aristrocratic *zamindar* family. Rightly he was so with his vast landed property and a palatial ancestral residence in the village of Talpada in Balasore. His wife Radhamoni was also a daughter of a big *zamindar*. They had four sons and eight daughters, of whom Lakshmikanta was the eldest. He was born on the 9th December, 1888. During his childhood days, he was lodged for sometime in the house of his maternal uncle but very soon was brought to Bhadrak where his father was practising law. Young Lakshmikanta was interested in dance, drama, music, sports and every other thing save education. He was, therefore, made to shuttle between Bhadrak and Balasore for completing the primary stage of his education.

Rightly anxious about the eldest son's proper education, Bhagabat prasad found out one Umacharan Das who was then staying at the Ravenshaw College Hostel for his education. Lakshmikanta was left at his charge. Umacharan became his local guardian cum tutor and this was undoubtedly beneficial for him. Umacharan was a serious type of man, honest and affectionate. In later years, he became a highly placed Government official. Close supervision by Umacharan during these formative years was a turning point for Laksmikanta. He did well in the Entrance Examination and got himself enrolled in the Intermediate class in Arts. His creative faculty started functioning from this time and he had loving encouragements from some of his classmates and contemporaries who in their own way left memorable marks in the history of Orissa. Of them the names of Chintamoni Acharya, Prana krushna Parija, Lakshmi narayan Sahu and Sachchidananda Roy may be mentioned here.

After passing the I.A. (1910) Lakshmikanta went to Calcutta for a brief spell of time. His mission was to have higher education there but it did not materialise. Nevertheless, he had a wholesome exposure to the 19th Century Bengali poetry, particularly to the writings of Madhusudan, Hemchandra, Nabinchandra and Rabindranath. Poet Rajanikanta Sen, a famous lyricist and composer of devotional songs, fired his imagination and he was in love with his works. He enjoyed listening to some of Rajanikanta's famous poems,

particularly the one which runs as : *'Kabe trishita maru chharia jaibo tomara rasala Nandane'*. This devotional song was his forte through out the tormented life. Lakshmikanta came back to Ravenshaw College and did his B.A. in 1913.

In the meantime he was married. Lalmohan Das, a *zamindar* of Sunhat, Balasore, was a close friend of Bhagabat prasad. Lalmohan had a beautiful young daughter, Labangalata,whom Bhagabat prasad also loved dearly. He told Lalmohan that he would accept Labangalata as his daughter-in-law after the graduation of his son. Lakshmikanta saw Labangalata more than once and took it for granted that she is going to be his wife. Those were the days of child-marriage and Lalmohan did not consider it wise to wait for Lakshmikanta's graduation. He started negotiations at different places. Lakshmikanta heard about it and was greatly depressed. As a sequel to this depression he wrote a story *'Pratidan'* and got it published. As good luck would have it, this story attracted the attention of no less a person but Fakirmohan Senapati. He sent for this young writer and urged upon him to pursue these literary activities. While discussing *'Pratidan'*,inter alia, he could sense the background and humorously assured the temporarily estranged lover that he would see to it. He meant what he said and Lakshmikanta was married with Labangalata very soon. Although she is said to have a sharp tongue, there is no doubt that she played the most pivotal role in the anguished life of this literary genius.

Apart from the bountiful contribution to Oriya literature, the members of this poet's family actively participated in the freedom movement and had their fair share of torture and suffering under the British rule. Even Kokila, one of Lakshmikanta's sisters, joined the salt campaign movement and courted arrest Kamalakanta, a brother, was a journalist and edited 'Prajatantra' for sometime. Another brother Sitakanta was political stalwart and was elected to the Bihar-Orissa Legislative Council and the Central Council of states. A family, which enjoyed plentiful blessing of the goddesses of Fortune and Learning both, had a very smooth sailing.

But unmixed blessings are probably inconceivable in our world of harsh reality. A piece of dark cloud came hovering over this family and cast its ominous spell on it.

After his graduation Lakshmikanta came to his village for rest and relaxation. Here he had an attack of fever. After some treatment fever subsided but preliminary symptoms of leprosy were noticeable. Bhagabat prasad spared no pains for the proper treatment of his son. He was even taken to the School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta, and left under the care of its Director Sir Leonard Rogers. Even after a prolonged treatment, results obtained were meagre and it was silently proclaimed that lakshmikanta shall have to co-exist with this incurable disease. He had a pair of sharp yet expressive eyes, a broad forehead, an aquiline nose, a fair complexion added to his tall stature. He was singularly handsome, blessed with a melodious voice, a

typical religious sensibility blended with a balanced power of strong reasoning. But alas! he has to be within the clutches of this disease for the rest of his life. Fortunately for the country, this ailment did not affect his morale adversely nor did he fall a prey to psychological depression of any kind.

Nietzsche once remarked, whatever does not kill you, makes you stronger. Lakshmikanta was an embodiment of this statement. His was a *Vaishnava* family with *Gopinatha* installed in their house as the family deity. Lakshmikanta was god-hungry since his childhood but he became rather ravenous for the divine after this period. He developed a sort of a less innocent relation to his physical discomfiture but a more serious and anxious one to his literary activities.

Bhagabat prasad fondly wanted Lakshmikanta, the eldest son in a pretty big undivided affluent family, to look after it and so also to take care of the worship of their family deity. The family preceptor Ramdas Babaji added string to it. He advised Lakshmikanta to devote religiously to the *'Nama-Kirtana'* of *Gopinatha*. The young tormented poet accepted all these assignments with right earnest. He founded 'Gopinatha Sangeeta Samaja'(1921) with Jagabandhu and Manamohan Sabat as his constant associates. The poet composed a good number of *Bhajans* and all of them used to sing those songs in the temple of *Gopinatha*. Lakshmikanta was an ardent student of the Odissi School of Music but now he developed

a preference for the North Indian classical form. It is around this time he composed most of his musical operas like *'Sharada Rasa'*, *'Basanta Bilas'*, *'Kaliya Dalana'* and others.

The tormented muse behind the poet's literary creations was slyly humourous. A man of lofty values refined culture and education could never endure hypocrisy and social injustice. A devout follower of Gandhiji's precepts, lashed out occasionally against the so-called self-seeking patriots and social parasites. His keen sense of morality associated with intolerance for inproper conduct landed him in trouble in the home front. Added to it was his constant physical anguish. Bhagabat prasad sensed the problems of his eldest son and removed him to Bhadrak. There he was placed in charge of a printing press, possibly the one which Fakirmohan had initially procured for prining books. There is an interesting episode about this press in Fakirmohan's autobiography. However, Lakshmikanta concentrated his attention on this press now and the *Gopinatha Sangeeta Samaja* of Taipada died a natural death.

Apart from highly subjective lyrical poems, Lakshmikanta composed long parodies with ease and felicity. Some of his writings are the brilliant examples of wit and sarcasm. His *Panchamruta* is a specimen of this kind of writing. In it, he minced no words to criticise the opportunist politicians of the day.

It was serialized in the *Prajatantra*. He started a fiction *Kana Mamu* never to conclude it. But this incomplete work of Lakshmikanta is itself a landmark in the history of Oriya novels.

Some of his patriotic songs are unique. His *'Bande Utkala Janani'* is a sparkling example and it has assumed the stature of Orissan national anthem. Language, which is a social creation, was remarkably responsive to the distinctive shaping of Lakshmikanta's individual use. He never minted a word nor did he harbour any ambition that any bit of his particular coinage would gain currency in the transactions of Oriya literature. But the fact remains that he depended exclusively on common Oriya words and showed how they are exploitable rhetorically and emotionally as well.

Our poet had a facile pen in English too. On request, he once wrote a drama in English for the *Observer*. His*'Music of the whistle'*, published in the *Current Affairs* attracted the attention of a French lady who tanslated into her mother language. His poems belonging to the anthology known as *Jeevana Sangeeta* were translated into English by the poet himself with the title *Songs of the Soul*.

It is in 1933, a meeting was first convened in the Bhadrak High School compound to offer felicitations to the poet on behalf of his countrymen. This was attended by almost all

the contemporary celebrities of Orissa. Here and now he was christened as *'Kantakabi'* by Lakshminarayan Sahu on behalf of the poet's innumerable admirers. More than two decades before this, the *'Kantakabi'* of Bengal, Rajanikanta Sen (1865-1910), had passed away. As has already been mentioned earlier, Laskhmikanta had built up a deep revering sense of respect for him. He might have come across Sen's anthologies *Bani* (1902) and *Kalyani* (1905) as he gave these names to two of his nieces who had lessons in music under him.

Bhagabat prasad passed away in 1936. It was too deep an affliction for our poet to tolerate. But sorrows are known to come in multitudes. Within short intervals he lost his brother Sitakanta and mother Radhamoni. These ordeals, however, made his devoutness all the more strong and he bent upon drawing solace and sustenance from his own world of literary creations. This was intrinsically his *Puja*, worship of the tutelary deity.

With his eldest son Nityananda as his devoted and trusted lieutenant, Lakshmikanta decided to publish a magazine *Dagara* from his press. Finance was the immediate hurdle. He had forty rupees with him which Nityananda earned as gift during his sacred-thread ceremony. Two of the poet's sisters came up with donations of ten rupees each and *Dagara* made its debut in 1937 with avowed ideals — Light, Lead and Langhter. Nityananda, the

rightful inheritor of his father in sense more than one, was put as the editor of the magazine. He was not only a budding writer but a freedom fighter burning bright. Whenever he was placed behind the bars, his father had to shoulder the responsibilities of *Dagara* in isolation. He was of course the perennial source of literary contributions for *Dagara* and that he continued till was laid at rest. This literary journal made its presence felt not among the Orissan contemporary intelligentsia alone, but on readers of different category having different taste and temperament. It contained materials of juvenile interest like *'Kasi Kakudi'*, *'Naranga'*, *'Angura'* *'Karamanga'*, and so also materials for the critical mind under the caption *'Bilua Bichara'*. His caustic criticism of erring political figures and despot feudal chiefs earned it an awful reputation. One feudal chief, who was being constantly criticized in the pages of *Dagara*, came up to donate a sum of six thousand rupees to the magazine fund. This was firmly yet respectfully declined by the duo — the father and the son.

Lakshmikanta was a creator and a critic rolled in one. But did his critical consciousness vie with his creative one ? The simple yet the most emphatic answer is — No. When he wrote poems, composed plays and parodies, he chose subjects that had naive relationship to his creative fantasy. But when he selected a topic or a current affair for critical discussion, he viewed it from a different angle of vision, threw on it his own sensibility

and finally measured it in the yardstick of his own evaluation system. This was a recreative faculty of the poet and quite naturally there was hardly any conflict within him. His own creative writings were expressions of his unrestrained expansive self, unstained by egotism or commercialism. These are precisely the reasons for which he belonged to a class all by himself.

It is, however, much gratifying to note that Kantakabi's contemporaries, seniors and juniors alike showered their unmixed praise and adulations on him from time to time in congregations arranged at Cuttack, Balasore and Bhadrak. On each of these occasions the poet received felicitations with humility and replied briefly with humble dignity. Smt. Sarala Devi, a contemporary celebrity, had a sweet relation with the poet. She also arranged meetings to congratulate the poet.

We have it on record that the best known novelist of the contemporary times, Fakirmohan Senapati, encouraged Lakshmikanta and praised his upcoming literary image lavishly. To dispel this young writer's doubts, he said, "Go on writing. The time is the best judge to cast aside the insignificant ones and preserve the best. Let flower and Sandal paste be showered on your pen." And true to this spirit of our cultural heritage, Laskhmikanta was also in the habit of offering unreserved encomiums on the literary green-horns. It shows without doubt that he was keeping a watchful eye on the writings of his juniors.

After his last felicitation in the *'Fakirmohan Sahitya Samsada* (1951, Feb.24), health of the poet showed indications of deterioration. The glow of the light was fading fast. He was in his mid-sixties yet could feel that his days were numbered. He made a trip, the last one, to his native village Talpada to offer his obeisance to *Gopinatha* and bid adieu to his dear and near ones there. He lay in prostrate before his family deity and there flowed out a spontaneous prayer from a deeply lacerated heart — "Oh, merciful Lord, set me free from all these sufferings! Deliver me from these earthly bonds !"

His prayers were heard and his soul was freed to merge in the Infinite. On his physical death, he entered the deathless region of immortality which is already graced by Vyas, Valmiki, Hugo, Shakespeare and their compeers beyond the limits of time, space and language. On the 24th February, 1953, at about 2 a.m. Kantakabi breathed his last leaving his wife and children by his bedside and a mourning multitude throughout the length and breadth of Orissa. A man who stood for Lead, Light and Laughter, an embodiment of refined culture and literary taste is very much remembered now as *'Kantakabi'* and shall be remembered as such by the posterity *ad* infinitum. If one cares to emulate his philosophy of life, there are the three words Lead, Light and Laughter — the quintessence of his thought process.

THE TRANSFORMATION

Sourindra Barik

Today his lyrics simply vibrate in my heart. They have almost bewitched me. But there was a day when I picked up his *Songs of the Soul* with a mixed feeling of doubt and indifference. To me this collection of poems was just an accretional anthology of some lyrics of an old Traditional poet. What else could it be to a man whose mind is blunted by the raucous sound of the present who is lost in the darkness of the dazzling objects, whose reason-ridden mind cannot see anything beyond the world of senses, and who is lost in the immediacy of the present ? Beyond the nowness of the Now, beyond the horizon of his self he cannot see anything. He is not allowed to do so. His rugged yet computerised mind is a helpless prisoner of his own fractured truth. Beyond reason, nothing remains for him ... a void infinitum.

To such a mind Lakshmikanta's poetry is just a verbal madness — a child's fantasy. The mind that analyses everything to understand and to formulate, it is but natural to accept the idea of soul with certain amount of scepticism. Modern mind is full of doubts. We doubt everything, even the act of doubting itself. With such a mind, my initial reaction for the songs was sceptical. The word 'soul' appeared nebulous, its songs meaningless.

But when I reread the poems, heard the songs — there I found a difference — as if the soft whisper of the wind coming from a distant land. They unfolded a new vista of experience — a new world, a new thrill beyond my logic, reason or even doubt. It gave me inexplicable joy. In analysing the poems, I tried to find out the criticism of contemporary life. But soon after, could realise my mistake. His poetry is not just a commentary on our immediate present, not "a criticism of life" — it is a revealation of the mystery of existence. It cannot be understood, it is to be felt. It is *the* rainbow, not just a combination of different colours. It is *the* passionate cry of man for the ultimate truth of life. It is *the* expression of the perpetual human longing for the ultimate joy.

Lakshmikanta's poetry is the expression of this mysterious truth which makes us forget the agonies of life. He always hears the irresistible call of the known stranger who comes from an unknown land and at the same time from within.

That call thrills my nerves and the heart
throbs and my soul in frenzy rushes out
to nestle down with him.

His poems are not of escape, not of running away from the harsh edge of reality into a world of dream. But it is the discovery of a new dimension of reality. It is not the poetry of renunciation. It is the acceptance

of a new world by submitting everything worldly. It is through this surrender one can change death to nectar of joy.

This is why his songs give hope. It is a source of consolation to a mind that has lost all hopes in life. It gives strength of mind to face the challenges of life. In this sense the songs are religious — not as an expression of dogma but as a source of mental peace; a calm, a bliss, in other word *Ananda*. This is the ultimate aim of life, the quest of all arts — the realization of God. Poet's agonising existence is a silent waiting for this ultimate :

Do stay a bit
I am just getting myself ready
To start with thee.

This preparation is to meet the known stranger. Mysterious are His ways, His relationship and Call. No less mysterious is also the poet's intense desire to mingle with Him. His sufferings, his joys are his prayers.

Pray, madden my charmed soul
with the magic of Thy weird
music.

The haunting quality of the songs is the intensity of passion. The white heat of feelings finds utterance through the simplicity of language. The poems are plaintive anthems of joys of being one with Him.

This song of love is the essence of the Indian attitude - the *summum-bonum* of life. Tagore in his *Geetanjali* sings the mystery of this relationship. Lakshmikanta in his *Songs of the Soul* sings the same experience in his own quaint way.

At first I was deceived. I tried to understand these songs with my logic. But now realize that they are my soul's yearning. With them I discovered myself. The 'Weird song' of the unknown became so meaningful for me. My heart, my soul, even my mind and brain — the whole being are possessed. My soul echoes, reechoes the songs. I am changed, gloriously defeated.

Songs of the Soul is immense poetry. It is simply unputdownable.

AT THY FEET

Washed with many a tear
of long and wakeful nights
and bearing many a sigh of despair,
these songs are but the outburst of my soul,
set down with my heart blood.

I know not, what peace and solace,
what joy and contentment
has been stored up
in each and every cadence of theirs:
those are my life's
eternal spring of nectar.

THY MUSIC ON MY HARP

Thy music resounds on my harp
ever and anon in fresh melodies.

I know not how to play, but have
kept the harp ready for Thee
to let Thy magic touch enrapture my
soul now and again.

Now the melody comes down in the
form of MEGHA with darkening clouds
and sparkling flashes of lightening;
again my heart thrills up in ecstasy
by a subtle cadence of BASANTA.

Sometimes LALITA and KAMODI
rumble about in lustful wails,
again the hopes of ASABARI die out
toiling in vain
and then my listless soul
fleets away in the ocean of a mysterious
harmony.

THE FLOWER THAT WITHERS

The flower that withers in me
blooms forth glorious in Thy arbour:
the song that vanishes in me, wakes
up sonorous in Thy murmurs.

Alone do I play upon my
lute in solitude, and when I cast it
aside exhausted, it is then that
the unfinished tune fleets along in
rapturous vibrations to resound
on Thy flute.

The countless agonies of my
fruitless life blossom up on Thy
breast in crimson roses and
my tears roll down to fall
on Thy feet as offerings of
adoration.

WHY O WHY

*If the flower has faded, why does its
smell fill the air: if the flame has
died out why does the glow linger still ?*

*If the Sun-god has hidden his face
behind the dusky hills, wherefore
does the scarlet hue peep out
on the western sky ?*

*If the spring has passed off
why does the Zephyr blow: if the heart
is blighted, why do the sighs persist ?*

*The harp is broken and the
cords snappped: why then are the
dying notes droning still ?*

*If the fruits have dropped,
why are the branches drooping
low: if the market is over, why
does the customer tarry ?*

HERE HE COMES

With the portals of my heart
ajar, I sit up in long waits
with the fancy - oh, here He
comes !

Often do I start at the rustling
of His gentle foot-falls, but alas ! I
have to pine on in fruitless vigil.

But that pain brims with
untold joy and hope - that
longing brings forth in its wake
many a bewitching desire for
sweet separation.

Such delusions are my cherished
object and such desires are the
final goal of my life: I wish
I be lost in them for ever !

MY HEART HEAVES UP

A flush of limpid moonlight
bursts out luxuriant on my faded flower garden
bathing it in a flood of delight,
and my heart heaves up in the expectation
of my Darling.

Fondled by the sweet carassing breeze,
my flower bud blooms up,
and the Zephyr approaches with a dancing
gait, his anklets tinkling in the rustle
of leaves: the cuckoo sings her note of welcome
perching on the branches
of the BAKULA tree.

For long long ages have I laid
aside many a tale in the lone corner
of my heart;

if modesty overtakes me not, I
shall spread my skirt on the tender
grass and whisper them to His
ears, forsaking my pride.

MY LONG CHERISHED ONE

O my long cherished one, I have laid
out the nuptial bed with all my desires
and yearnings wrapped up in it.

Under this maddening flood of moonlight
my wild heart rushes along to Thy rosy
feet: wilt Thou ever deny me the
bliss of Thy ecstatic embrace
in this beatific night ?

How I wish I could reveal to
Thee in secret the untold tales of
many a birth, lying together on a
flowery bed in solitude, with lips
to lips and eyes to eyes locked.

MY LIFE'S MISSION IS OVER

My life's mission is over: O Lord
grace the gates of my heart at this
crucial hour.

I am waiting for Thy gentle approach,
eager to pour all my joys and
griefs at Thy feet.

O Thou, the Good and the Beautiful,
O Thou, the moon of my heart,
let the light of Thy shining
feet illume my path,
to glide me across the dark ocean
of Death with glee.

WHEN YOU REMEMBERED

O Beloved ! Hast Thou remembered me
at long last ! Have I not been pining
for Thee all my life with sleepless eyes !

A stream of ambrosia babbles
along and enlivens my grove into a
wilderness of flowers.

My soul loses itself in a spell
of mysterious music and vanishes
into a land of dream.

Some mystic impulse drags my
heart to roll in ecstasy and my wild
harp strikes up a dissonant note.

WHEN YOU ROB ME OF EVERYTHING

How will it add to Thy glory to rob me of my all ? Hast Thou not taken whatever Thou gavest ? What more is left that Thou canst deprive me of ?

Only an aspirant of worldly possessions runs after Thee: what threat canst Thou hold out for one who has all his hopes blasted ? Duped from time to time, I know Thy wiles now.

To avoid Thy snares, have I kicked off all my worries: how else wouldst Thou entrap one who has cut off all his ties ?

I know Thy Siren's call to make a fun of me: dost Thou lure me further to make me eat the humble pie by tweaking my own nose and ears ?

THE PLAINTIVE PIPER

Who is piping this plaintive note
in the grove of my heart ? Whose is this
charming image that wakes up in me ?

The crazy pipe blows softly
within and swells up in evergreen
modes and fresh melodies.

My heart leaps up with youthful
vivacity and floats along to His sweet
embrace in elation.

WHO IS IT

Who is it that peeped through the
chink of my window ! But slipped off
before I could catch a glimpse of Him.

I know not why my wits failed me
then, and my eyelids dropped in shyness.

Oh, He did not tell me why He stole
in at the close of night.

It appears as if we are acquaintances
of old: that is why a forgotten
melody faintly breaks out in my bosom.

I know not if it is imbued with
joy or sorrow, but the heart echoes it
with every beat although.

WHO CALLS

Whoever is calling with artful pauses
from the other side of the Lethe ?

Me thinks I heard this voice of
uncertain identity ages long ago.

The broken voice, it seems, emerges from behind
the clouds
and swims across the solitary seas
passing through far off caves and crevices.

That hazy call comes repeatedly in wavy
swells and seems like the distant
babbles of a child.

That call thrills my nerves and
the heart throbs up and my soul, in
frenzy rushes out to nestle
down with Him.

OPEN THY DOOR

Do open your closed doors: I have stepped in only for a moment just to deliver a bit of message.

Don't be shy, I am not a stranger; we are friends of old and I rove about with your burdens on my head.

Oh, do not press me to wait longer; I am awfully busy.

When time comes, I will force myself upon thee, without your asking for it.

THE STRANGE KNOCK

Who can it be that knocked at
my door ! But lo ! He is vanished
the moment I opened the door to
look out.

Whoever Thou might be, I cannot
guess what Thy errand might be
with me.

Do stay a bit,
I am just getting myself ready
to start with Thee.

I wonder why Thou camest at all,
if Thou meant to go back without
waiting for me.

Thou cannot be far off,
as I hear Thy flute ringing younder !

Pray, madden my charmed
soul with the magic of Thy weird
music.

HE CAME AT THE END OF NIGHT

I believe He stole in at the fag end
of night, for whom I was keeping vigil.

The desires of my heart lay lurking
within and my fancies faded into
airy dreams.

I wish I had feasted my eyes on Him.
Alas ! I could not finish the worship,
but the image still sticks to the pupil of
my eyes.

I have treasured up the withered
flowers in the innermost
recess of my heart.

HE RETURNED IN DESPAIR

Oh, how did He return in deep despair after a vain and silent watch ! Could He not COO into my ears a sweet word of endearment !

Was I not keeping up night with wakeful eyes in eager expectation ! But Ah ! under what a spell my listless eyelids weighed down into a doze in the early hours of the morning.

I know not why He laid His anguish down on my bed and stepped out quietly: but the sigh He left behind still haunts the dreary air.

NEVER DID THY SHADOW

Ah, never did Thy shadow cross my expectant eyes: but they shed on ceaseless streams of tears by constant watching.

I know no where from Thou dost come, and in what sphere dost Thou move: I wonder with what a skill dost Thou vanish like a flash of lightening.

Many a desire that springs up in the bosom, dies out at its birth, and many a flower drops down in the bud.

Pray, off with this lure: the torture is unbearable.

A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

Never have I glimpsed His form
with my eyes, but have realised it
by intuition. Since then I have
sold my life off to Him.

He appears not in the light of day,
but steals in gently into the realm
of dream like a phantom of delight,
bewitching my soul with His sweet
and tender affections.

The more I muse on, the more does
my heart lose itself within.

Alas ! how silly am I to
deliver my heart to Him so blindly !

YOU AND I

You do not need Me even
by mistake, but I am watching you
for ever: you do not want Me even
for a moment, but I abide by you for ever.

You go on frolicking free from cares
and pass the time in joy, but I am
carrying the burden of your sorrows and pains,
worries and wants on My
head for ever !

How pleasant are your endearing
importunities ! Willingly do I bear
them on My breast for ever !

THE SPELL

*Who is it that drags me along so
skillfully and that whereto ?*

*I only feel the pull but cannot scan
Him out.*

*High up He takes me sometimes and
sometimes rolls me down. Now He ambles
along with gentle steps and swiftly
runs the next.*

*Ever He has His hold on my hand
and keeps my company: still I grope around
the world to find Him out.*

*I know not, what for and whereto
he drives me along: is it that I
have been charmed by some spell !*

I PICKED IT UP

I picked it up in my dreams and
hid it in secret : Oh, how have I
lost this priceless treasure
by mistake !

Streams of endless tears, which
are but the effusion of my bleeding
heart, now serve to adorn my chest:
and I shall embalm them
with care as a rare essential
for ever.

TELL ME NO MORE OF HIM

Oh, tell me no more, no more of Him.

Care I not, if I die for His sake.

Is it not He who has given me
a hell for it ! Say, for what good
shall I implore Him again !

Could He but conceive the pangs
of my heart, I would gladly rush
up to Him and kiss the dust of
His feet.

But I have cried my self
hoarse in vain and am tired.

Let it stop now and let me wipe
myself out only for Him.

WHAT DO I CARE

What do I care ! Has not the worst
come to worst !

The merry days are over and
the raft sunk: for what good shall I trifle
any more ?

Have not all my pride and vanity
come to a finish and all the hopes
and desires withered in the
bosom.

Now that all is lost, I cling
to the battered boat waiting
eagerly for the supreme hour.

NEVER A STRANGER

*Not a Stranger is He,
never oh never.*

*Does He not reign supreme
within as the Lord of my life !*

*For many a birth have I
enshrined Him in the secret
regions of my bosom.*

*I have wreathed the flowers alone,
and have attuned the cords of my
heart to His melody.*

*Full many a hope lies lurking
within, frought with many a joy,
and many a silent word murmurs
in my breast.*

*Oh, the memory itself is steeped
in endless tears.*

THE BEAUTIOUS ONE

O, the Beautious One, the abode of
evergreen love and joy sublime,

Thy sacred touch brings forth ever new
delights to me, and Thy music pours
down on my heart the sweetness of
celestial juice.

Thy image is manifest within and
without, far and near, on land and
water and on the sky;

O charming and serene one, O sweet and soothing,

Thy bewitching loveliness
rushes down ceaselessly to ravish my soul
for ever.

I KNOW THY WAYS

The cup of suffering is overful and
the sting of sorrows sharp.

I have become tired of keeping Thy house.

One who counts on Thee is but duped
at last.

I know now that Thy ways are but
a lure.

Don't ply me with Thy
honeyed words any more to
beguile me.

Afterall, Thy affections have
been amply brought home to me;
pray, now let me alone:

HERE COMES THE CALL

With all hopes blighted and
all happiness gone, - why not drive
straight along dauntless !

The lifelong struggle has ended
in the burying of all earthly desires .

When the last ray of light has
faded from the jaded eyes,
and the last flicker of the lamp
of hope has died in the hearts
recess, - why linger any more !

Hark, there comes the clarion call of
welcome: set out at once at this
happy hour.

MY ROTTEN BOAT & THE TINY STAR

My rotten boat drifts aimlessly.

The last glimmers of light are
fading fast and the sea is shoreless.

Will my listless soul merge
itself into you deep darkness of the
night !

Endless breakers are
rolling one after another as if to
swallow my feeble large.

Dire desolation reigns around
and there is none to succur me: only a
twinkling tiny star
stares from the lonely nook of
the distant firmament.

O CRAZY TUNE

O Crazy tune, why dost Thou
still hum around me ! Have
I not wrecked my lute and
broken its strings.

At this happy hour of the
morn, the heart-swelling song
of the lark runs riot the endless sky through and
through.

O Thou mad music,
fly along through the dew-
drenched air to Thy ethereal .
home that glimmers beyond the clouds.

Sprays of vermilion dust
spurt out through the
chinks of clouds and the lustrous
face of the moon has turned pale.

My work is up here and
this meeting is our last; alone
have I fitted myself up,
bound for a long long journey.

THE HARP LIES MUTE

The spright of my soul is lost
and the moonshine gone.

The hillarious heart is down in
solemn silence and myriads of
full-blown flowers drop rolling on
the ground.

Dead darkness shrouds the
gay and radiant sky: the swells
of music over and the drums are
silent; the wild dance has come to
an end and the harp lies mute.

SYMPHONY OF SILENCE

Oh, what a deep and living
symphony sails along the enchanted
heavens, drenched in dead silence !

The regions remain rigidly
restful, and the Earth sunk in slumber;
the road is quiet and the night
is full.

Arise, O pilgrim of the eternity
and plunge thy boat in the
ocean of profound darkness.

An original Song with TUNE

ରାଗ—ଦେଶାକ୍ଷ

ବନ୍ଧୁ, ଏତେ ଦିନେ ଅନ୍ତ ମନେ ପଡ଼ିଲୁ ମୋର
ଅଭିଭ ବିଧୁରେ ଦୁଃଖ (ଦୁଃଖ) ଲଭିବା ପାଇଁ । ଯୋ ।
ଭୁଞ୍ଜିଲ ଦୁଃଖରେ ଯେବେ   ଅଦ୍ଭୁତ ଦୁଃଖ ମୁହିଁ
ଜଗତ ଅଦ୍ଭୁତ ଏହ ଉଚ୍ଚିତ ଦାବି ।
ଅହୋ! ଭାବେଷ ଦେଇ ଯୋଗଦ ସୁରେ
ସବୁର ଅଇଲୁ ଏବେ ସୁଖଦ ଦୂରେ
ଅଲଣ ଅଦେଶେ ଭିଦ   ବନ୍ଧୁ ଭବଣ ଅଭ
ଦେଖୁଛି ଉଠିଲୁ ଭାଗ (ଯୋ) ସୁଖ-ସୁଖ ।

ସ୍ଥାୟୀ

ନିସ	ସ	ନି	ସ	ସ	ସ	ମଗ	ଗ	ଗ	ମ	ଗ	ନି	ପ	ଧପ	ସ	—	—
(ବନ୍ଧୁ) ଏ	ତେ	ଦି	ନେ	ଅ	ନ୍ତ	ମ	ନେ	ପ	ଡ଼ି	ଲୁ	ମୋ	ର	॰	॰	॰
ନି	ଧ	ସ	ନି		ଧ	ସ	ଗସ	ଗସ	ମ	ଗ	ନି	ପ	ଗମ	ମ	ନି	ମ
ଅ	ଭି	ଭ	ବି		ଧୁ	ରେ	ଦୁଃ	ଖ	ଲ	ଭି	ବା	ପା	ଇଁ	॰	ଯୋ	॰

ଅନ୍ତରା

ସ	—	ମଗ	ମ	ସ	ପ	ସଂଧ	ସଂ	ସଂ	ରେଂ	ସଂ	ସଂ	ନସଂ	ରେଂସଂ	ଧପ	ସ
ଭୁ	ଞ୍ଜି	ଲ	ଦୁ	ଦୁଃ	ଖ	ରେ	ଯେ	ବେ	ଅ	ଦ୍ଭୁ	ତ	ଦୁଃ	ଖ	ମୁ	ହିଁ
ସ	ନି	—	—	ଧ	ନି	ଧ	ନି	ସ	—	ମଗ	ମ	ଗମ	ସ	ନି	ମ
ଜ	ଗ	ତ	ଅ	ଦ୍ଭୁ	ତ	ଏ	ହ	ଉ	ଚ୍ଚି	ତ	ଦା	ବି	॰	ଯୋ	॰

ସଞ୍ଚାରୀ

ସ	—	—	—	ଗସ	ନିସ	ସ	ଗ	ଗ	ସ	ଗ	ମଗ	ସନି	—	—	ଧପ
ଅ	ହୋ	ଭା	ବେ	ଷ	ଦେ	ଇ	ଯୋ	ଗ	ଦ	ସୁ	ରେ	॰	॰	॰	॰
ସ	ନି	—	—	ସ	ନି	ସ	ସ	ନି	ପ	ନି	ଗ	ସ	—	—	—
ସ	ବୁ	ର	ଅ	ଇ	ଲୁ	ଏ	ବେ	ସୁ	ଖ	ଦ	ଦୂ	ରେ	॰	॰	॰
ସ	—	ମଗ	ମ	ସ	ପ	ସଂଧ	ସଂ	ପ	ସଂ	ନସଂ	ସଂ	ଧସଂ	ନି	ଧ	ସ
ଅ	ଲ	ଣ	ଅ	ଦେ	ଶେ	ଭି	ଦ	ବ	ନ୍ଧୁ	ଭ	ବ	ଣ	ଅ	ଭ	॰
ସ	ନି	—	—	ଧ	ନି	ଧ—	ନି	ସ	ଗମ	ନି	ମ	ଗମ	ସ	ନି	ମ
ଦେ	ଖୁ	ଛି	ଉ	ଠି	ଲୁ	ଭାଗ	ଯୋ	ସୁ	ଖ	ସୁ	ଖ	॰	॰	ଯୋ	॰

TUNE PREPARED BY Musicians of *Gopinatha Sangeeta Samaja*, with the assistance of Kantakabi.

Three Criginal Songs in Oriya
of Kantakavi in Roman Script

SABUTHIRU BANCHITA KARI

Sabuthiru banchita kari
Keun jasa bāna udaiba he
Jāha deithila sabuta nelani
Au ebe kisa chadaiba he. (Ghosa)

Sansāre je karai āsa
Dhaen sina se tumbha pasa
Sakala bharasā jāra tutilani
Kisa boli tāku daraiba he. (1)

Thaki thaki tharaku thara
Bujhilini tumbha chātara
Mane pānchichaki hāta majhitare
Chidākari bata hudaiba he. (2)

Tuma phandā edibi boli
Sabu dhandā delini theli
Chāri daudi je kati sarilini
Keun phānde tāku jadāiba he. (3)

Hāta thari lobha dekhāi
Daka nāta dekhiba pāin
Sihana karucha āhuri thare ki
Nāka ghasi kāna modiba he. (4)

BANDE UTKAL JANANI

Bande Utkala Janani
Charuhāsamaye chāruvasamayē
Janani janani janani.

Putapayodhi bidhouta sarirā
Tāla tamāla susovita tirā
Subhra tatinikula sikara samirā
Janani janani janani.

Ghanabanabhumi rājita angē
Nila bhudhara mālā sāje tarange
Kala kalą mukharita chāru bihange
Janani janani janani.

Sundara sāli susobhita khetrā
Gyāna Bigyāna pradarsita netrā
Yogirsigana utaja pabitra
Janani janani janani.

Sundara mandira mandita desā
Charukalabali sobhita besa
Punya tirthachaya purna pradesā
Janani janani janani.

Utkala surabara darpita geha
Arikula sonita charchita deha
Visva bhumandala krutabara snehā
Janani janani janani.

Kabikulamouli sunandana bandyā
Bhubanabighosita kirtianindyā
Dhanya punye chira saranye
Janani janani janani.

KOTI KOTI KANTHE AJI

Koti koti kanthe āji, Uthure gambhire bāji
Utkalara jaya giti unmādanābhara
Kampiuthu sailarāji, sasāgara dharā
Kampiuthu sunye sunye akasa abani
Punyamayi mā mora utkala janani. (Ghosa)

Purbaprānte range range, Ananta taranga bhange
Barānidhi gaye jaya utkalara jaya
Visvajayi mā mora ki bhaya ki bhaya
Paschimanta girisrnge bāje pratidhvani
Santimayi mā mora utkala janani.

Abhra rāsi stare stare, Gambhira malhara svare
Bajranāde gāe jaya kampi jāye mahi
Saila sila tarali nadrupe jae bahi
Svarnabhusā manditā mā koti dhane dhani
Ratnamayi mā mora utkala janani.

Bhairabare matta kari, Bajuchi sankha bheri
Hunkāri juthe juthe jete jantukula
Pratidhvani die tāra Kshudita sardula
Harjakshyara Garjanare sarjai asani
Birjyamayi mā mora utkala janani.

Dipta Surya rasmi jāle, Snigdha chandra jyotsnā dhāle
Phutiuthe tarārāji nila byomapate
Ratnākara phingi die ratnarasi tate
Soundaryara Mādhuryara aisvaryara khani
Souryamayi mā mora utkala janani.

GLOSSARY

Ashabari	: Name of a raga in Indian Classical Music
Bakula	: A typical flower, golden yellow in colour
Basanta	: Spring Season
Bhajans	: Prayer Songs
Coo	: Call of the cucoo : a bird
Gopinatha	: Name of a deity
Kamodi	: Name of a raga in Indian Classical Music
Lalita	: Name of a raga in Indian Classical Music
Megha	: Rain
Namakirtana	: Chauting of the name of a God
Puja	: Worship
Vaishnava	: A seet in Hindu Religion Tradition
Zamindar	: A feudal lord

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* It contains 124 poems written for children

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